

# Options Counseling Exercise

## Family Profile: Early Stage Dementia Challenge

Harold is 78 years old, and his wife Marjorie is 76. They have three children, Dennis, Bob, and Linda, all married. Bob and Linda live in the area, and Dennis lives about 35 miles from their home.

Harold had worked in the paper industry for years. They are financially comfortable at this time in retirement. Marjorie was a stay-at-home mom, and counted on Harold to take care of the handyman/yard chores in their home.

Two years ago, Harold started showing signs of repetition and short-term memory issues. He also stopped doing things around the house. Marjorie was very upset with this change. She felt he had become lazy in retirement and didn't feel there was anything wrong with his memory. Marjorie stated: "At 78, what do you expect, we all forget little things now and again." Their three children wanted to arrange an appointment with the Memory Assessment Clinic after consulting with his primary care physician, but Marjorie was adamantly against it. There is no advanced directive in place because Harold and Marjorie didn't like talking about such gloomy things.

Marjorie became more upset with Harold's annoying behaviors—the repetition, the lack of personal care, and "not doing anything all day but rocking in a chair and sleeping..." As time passed, the children became aware that Harold was losing a great deal of weight—he was 6'1" and now weighed only 130 lbs. Marjorie was not preparing meals—she said he would say he wasn't hungry. Dennis, however, said that when he took his Dad out to eat, he would eat voraciously—there was nothing wrong with his appetite. In a follow-up appointment with the doctor, he was concerned about the weight loss and behaviors that were worsening. The doctor suggested medication for his increasing memory loss and behaviors. Marjorie didn't want anything that would make Harold sleep more than he already was. Harold had become aggressive with Marjorie on a few occasions when she challenged him, and now she feared for her safety.

Dennis, Linda, and Bob felt that their mother did not understand the disease nor how to cope with the new behaviors, and that she wasn't providing things he now needs—food made for him, cueing him to attend to personal care, etc. The children feel they need to talk with their parents, but don't know how to approach them. They feel Marjorie will suddenly think she cannot have Harold at home anymore and send him to a nursing home. Marjorie also has some health issues—besides arthritis and needing a knee replacement, she has some heart rhythm problems. The family was concerned that she was becoming overwhelmed and the stress was wearing her down. Dennis contacted the ADRC and you meet with the family.

*Option Counseling Issues:*

- Concern with Harold's weight loss and aggressive behaviors
- Education/support group for Marjorie on dementia
- Assistance with the children having open discussions with their parents
- Options for caregiver stress
- Financial/legal concerns and future housing options for Harold

Notation	Content Stage of Change	Questions To Ask Find the “Why” and Find the Way Get to the “Aha” Moment
<p><b>ASSESSMENT OF NEED/SITUATION</b></p> <p><i>Objective data</i></p> <p><i>Subjective impression</i></p> <p><i>Descriptive</i></p>	<p><i>Needs, skills, abilities</i></p> <p><i>Why are they calling today</i></p> <p><i>Stage of Change</i></p> <p><i>Formal and informal supports</i></p> <p><i>Financial status</i></p>	



Notation	Content Stage of Change	Questions To Ask Find the “Why” and Find the Way Get to the “Aha” Moment
<p><b>ACTION STEPS</b> What are the <i>1<sup>st</sup> steps</i> the consumers will take and who will do them</p> <p><i>Summarize and reflect</i></p>	<p>Prioritize What should happen first-what is most likely to produce small successes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5.</li> </ol>	

